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ABSTRACT

This guide suggests ways to improve communication skills for those individuals just starting out in the business world. The guide offers advice from an abundance of sources condensed into easy-to-follow lists on the subjects of: (1) dress tips for men and women; (2) introductions; (3) remembering people's names; (4) conversational techniques for business; (5) conversational topics to avoid; (6) using bodily language for personal advantage: (7) giving instructions; (8) diffusing conflict and maintaining good rapport; (9) coping with job tension; (10) appropriate behavior at meetings; (11) ensuring a raise; (12) setting up a network; (13) moving up by networking sideways; (14) establishing a contact base; (15) expanding a contact base; (16) obtaining and using referrals; and (17) following up on meetings. (SG)

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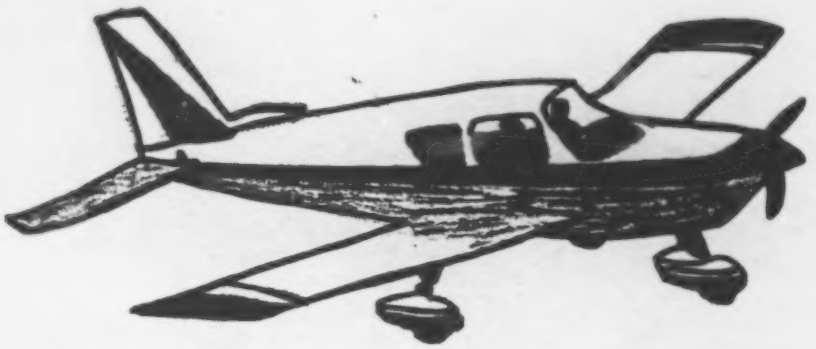
Flight to Success



A collection of lists created for today's business world

Written by: Duquesne University's Business and Professional Communication Class, Spring Semester 1990

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PREFACE

Welcome to the Flight to Success. Our flight today will comprise of a takeoff, stabilization phase, and will ultimately land into new horizons. The flight attendants for the Flight to Success will first escort you to your gate and show you the runway to personal success.

Now please direct your attention to your flight attendant as he gives you full instructions on how to use the Flight to Success by following the table of contents and tells the story of how it got off on the ground.

So sit back, get comfortable, and prepare for takeoff!!

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....

TAKEOFF.....1

TWENTY DRESS TIPS FOR MEN AND WOMEN
EIGHT TIPS TO REMEMBER DURING INTRODUCTIONS
SEVEN TIPS TO REMEMBER SOMEONE'S NAME

STABILIZATION.....4

THIRTEEN CONVERSATIONAL TECHNIQUES FOR BUSINESS
SEVEN TOPICS THAT SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED
FIVE WAYS TO USE BODY LANGUAGE TO YOUR ADVANTAGE
NINE SUGGESTIONS FOR GIVING INSTRUCTIONS
FOUR METHODS TO DIFFUSE CONFLICT AND MAINTAIN GOOD RAPPORT
NINE WAYS TO COPE WITH TENSION AT WORK
NINETEEN APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS FOR ATTENDING A MEETING

LANDING IN NEW HORIZONS.....9

TEN WAYS TO ENSURE A RAISE
FOUR STEPS TO SETTING UP A NETWORK
SIX SUGGESTIONS TO MOVE UP BY NETWORKING SIDEWAYS
FOUR WAYS TO ESTABLISH A CONTACT BASE
NINE TACTICS TO EXPAND YOUR CONTACT BASE
SEVEN WAYS TO OBTAIN AND USE REFERRALS
SIX WAYS TO FOLLOW UP ON YOUR MEETING

SUMMMARY.....13

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

The purpose of this booklet is to provide the reader with tips to personal success that can be accessed with ease. This booklet is a combined group effort to aid in the achievement of personal success. As students of Business and Professional Communications, our education has been focused towards communication in a business setting. We have realized the need for a guide to personal behavior patterns and proper business etiquette.

HOW THE BOOK IS STRUCTURED

This booklet is structured to be used as a quick reference. It condenses an abundance of material into 17 easy-to-follow lists. An analogy has been made between the path to success and an airplane flight. We have applied the takeoff, stabilization, and landing in new horizons phases. These three phases are correlated to the early stages of our professional careers.

THREE PHASES OF YOUR FLIGHT

The first phase, takeoff, is designed to prepare the reader for entry into the business world. Topics discussed include appropriate dress, introductions, and name recall. Becoming familiar with these lists will give you a good start in business.

The second phase, stabilization, covers general business practices which will be required of the reader in a place of employment. Lists in this section include conversational techniques, body language, giving instructions, diffusing conflicts, and maintaining good rapport, just to name a few.

The third and final phase of our flight, landing in new horizons, considers topics that will be applicable after the reader is established in a place of business and ready to move forward in their careers. Insuring a raise and developing networks is the focus of this section.

TAKEOFF

TWENTY DRESS TIPS FOR MEN AND WOMEN

MEN:

1. Choose a conservative tie of fine design.
2. Choose a suit made of wool or poly/wool blend.
3. Wear a freshly pressed, button down shirt in traditional white.
4. Be conventional. Understand the norm and accept it.
5. When choosing a briefcase, choose a color that is neutral and coordinates with many of your outfits.
6. Do not wear sports jackets.
7. Do not wear a jacket with oversized shoulders. This tends to look unprofessional.
8. Do not wear suspenders when wearing a belt.
9. If wearing a uniform, keep it clean, neatly pressed and don't fasten something to the fabric that will make you look different from the others.

WOMEN:

10. Choose a crisp suit in a wrinkle-free fabric, preferably wool.
11. Choose a skirt which is knee length or longer.
12. Choose accessories that give your suit a polished look.
    - A string of pearls, small gold earrings, and a bag which matches your shoes.
13. Choose a simple hairstyle that is neatly groomed.
    - Eliminate eccentric styles.
    - A conservative style is preferred.
14. Wear shoes with a moderate heel.
    - Choose the heel according to your height and desired comfort.
15. Choose solid stockings of a conservative color.
    - Avoid stripes, dots, lace and offensive colors.
16. When choosing a briefcase, choose a color that is neutral and coordinates with many of your outfits.
17. Do not wear floral suits unless appropriate in your workplace.
18. Do not try to dress like your male associates. A skirt does not express inferiority.
19. Do not wear too much perfume.
    - Use a scent to compliment your personality, not overpower it.
20. If wearing a uniform, keep it clean, neatly pressed, and don't fasten something to the fabric that will make you look different from the others.

EIGHT TIPS TO REMEMBER DURING INTRODUCTIONS

1. Introduce a lower ranking person to a higher ranking person.
2. Introduce a younger person to a older person.
3. A man is presented to a woman unless he has higher prestige.
4. Anyone introduced to another person should stand and shake hands.
5. Grasp the persons hand firmly while making eye contact.
6. Use a courteous greeting.
7. Be prepared to shake hands with anyone you meet.
8. Show good manners by standing to greet anyone who comes into your office.

SEVEN TIPS TO REMEMBERING SOMEONE'S NAME

1. Repeat the name when introduced.
   - Try, "I'm pleased to meet you Mr. Smith."
2. Do not be afraid to ask someone to repeat their name if it is unclear to you.
3. Say the name a few times to yourself during the conversation.
4. Repeat the name upon leaving.
   - "Again Mr. Smith, it was a pleasure meeting you."
5. Repeat the name minutes after the meeting with the intention of remembering it.
6. Associate the name with the topic of discussion, person who introduced you, place of meeting and their appearance.
7. Remember that attention and concentration are the main factors that will enable you to remember a person's name and face.

STABILIZATION

THIRTEEN CONVERSATIONAL TECHNIQUES FOR BUSINESS

1. You should be well-informed and talk on a broad range of subjects.
   -Do not only speak about areas in which you specialize; such topics may bore your guest and lead to your monopolizing the conversation.
2. Show interest in other's profession.
   -Ask questions and show concern towards their job. Inquire about changing conditions in their field.
3. Keep abreast of the major news in the world.
   -This will not only benefit you, but it will also be a topic others know about and is therefore a possible conversation topic.
4. Be able to make a subject change when necessary.
   -Learn to detect topics which bother the other and be able to have a "safe" topic available.
5. Adjust to the person to whom you are speaking.
   -Adjust the conversation for a mutual understanding. Avoid professional jargon which could offend or exclude the other.
6. Make statements based on knowledge and experience, not conjecture.
   -Never exaggerate your knowledge or lack of understanding of the subject. Ask questions !
7. When conversing, look the person straight in the eye.
   -This reflects personal confidence, interest in the subject, and respect towards others
8. Congratulate others on their accomplishments.
   -This includes both personal and professional achievements and promotes team spirit.
9. Do not interupt.
10. Accept compliments gracefully.
    -Never refuse a compliment or deny that it is true. Express gratitude.
11. Make all compliments sincere.
12. Know when and how to talk about non-business subjects.
13. Address everyone within the group.
    -Glance at each person when you talk. Do not discuss something that many of the people will not understand.

SEVEN TOPICS THAT SHOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED

1. Other people's health.
2. Controversial subjects.
3. Cost of personal belongings.
4. Personal misfortunes.
5. Subjects that have been exhaused.
6. Stories of questionable taste.
7. Gossip of any kind.

FIVE WAYS TO USE BODY LANGUAGE TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

1. Shake hands with a strong grip.
2. Sit attentively; do not slump.
3. Look at the person at all times. Do not look at the surroundings.
4. When you want to make a point, sit up straight and appear more intent.
5. Keep your hands and legs from fidgeting. Do not drum, tap, click pen, etc. . . .

NINE SUGGESTIONS FOR GIVING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Give instructions, not commands.
2. Tailor your instructions to whom you are speaking.
3. Keep instructions at the receiver's level of understanding.
4. Be specific.
5. Use examples or demonstrations to reinforce the instructions given.
6. Explain why you are giving the instructions.
7. Listen attentively to the receiver's questions.
8. Give feedback.
9. Ask the receiver to repeat instructions.

FOUR METHODS TO DIFFUSE CONFLICT AND MAINTAIN GOOD RAPPORT

1. Resolve the conflict while in a calm state. Search for solutions and not a person on whom to place the blame.
2. Look beyond the words to the context to obtain the true message.
3. In resolving conflict, one must recognize each participant's position. You must realize that there is more than one opinion and each one has its own valor.
4. Solutions should be a compromise.

NINE WAYS TO COPE WITH TENSION AT WORK

1. Take some time for yourself.
   -Break away from the workplace for any period of time. Use the time regroup your thoughts.
2. Take a deep breath .
   -This can be done at any time. Usually counting to ten helps calm the nerves.
3. Find a friend.
   -Meet someone who works in the office with your sense of humor. When feeling stressed, find them and have a good laugh.
4. Stay in control.
   -Always keep the upper hand on the situation.
5. Do not allow small problems to get you down.
   -Focus your energy.
6. Accentuate the positive.
   -Do not focus on failure, but rather concentrate on something your did well and the feelings involved.
7. A positive attitude yields positive performance.
8. Do not take on more than you can handle.
   -Learn to say "no" to additional work if you know it is an overload.
9. Let off steam.
   -Letting yourself loose control may be an effective way to cope with stress. However, make sure you do it alone and never in front of your boss or co-workers.

EIGHTEEN APPROPIATE BEHAVIORS FOR ATTENDING A MEETING

1. Dress conservatively.
2. Arrive on time.
   -If possible, arrive several minutes before the scheduled time.
3. Introduce yourself in a friendly manner.
   -Hand out business cards and tell a little about your company and yourself. This will help you get better aquanted with those not from your company.
4. If a newcomber, do not take a seat until someone motions for you to sit.
5. Always remember that the seat on the right or the left of the chairman is usually reserved for honored guests or a high ranking partner.
6. If the meeting is delayed be conversational to those at your sides.
   -Discuss current events or topics which will be discussed in the meeting.
7. Arrive prepared for the meeting with all your information organized.
8. Carefully prepare your presentation.
   -Rehearse your remarks, prepare for possible questions, and check all necessary equiptment prior to the meeting.
9. Take careful notes of the discussion and criticisms made.
10. Remain alert and look interested throughout the meeting.
11. Resist the temptation to monopolize the proceedings.
12. Avoid interrupting whomever is speaking.
    -Make a note of your question and ask when they are finished.
13. Ask for clarification of unclear points.
14. Be relaxed and show positive emotions.
    -Do not be violent or rude if you disagree with a member of the meeting.
15. Use the editorial "we" instead of "I" when talking to a group.
16. Think before you speak.
    -Do not present comments in a sloppy or disorganized manner. Also, keep the points relavent to the subject.
17. Never drink any beverage from the can or containter; always use a glass.
18. Quietly thank the chairman as he or she leaves the room at the end of the meeting.
19. Later, congratulate anyone who spoke well in the meeting.

LANDING

IN

NEW

HORIZONS

TEN WAYS TO ENSURE A RAISE

1. Time your request to coincide with an accomplishment.
   -For example, after completing a major project or closing a major business deal would be an opportune time to request a raise.
2. Find out if your company is in a financial position to give you a raise.
   -Check sales and stock market.
3. Find out if the amount you are asking for is appropriate for your position.
   -Consult "The Occupational Outlook Handbook."
4. Use this information (2 and 3) to support your argument for a raise and be prepared to tell your boss where the information was obtained.
5. Before asking for a raise, think of the reasons your boss may give for denying you the raise and have a counter-argument prepared.
6. If you believe that you do not deserve a raise after speaking with your boss, do not continue to insist.
7. Prepare a statement about how your receiving a raise will benefit the company.
8. Explain that a raise will enhance your motivation to work harder.
9. Make a list of all your current duties and responsibilities, and take this list to your meeting.
10. Do not threaten to resign unless you are prepared to do so. It is advised that you do not resign without an alternative job.

FOUR STEPS TO SETTING UP A NETWORK

1. Establish a contact base.
2. Expand your contact base.
3. Find and use referrals.
4. Follow up.

SIX SUGGESTIONS TO MOVE UP BY NETWORKING SIDEWAYS

1. Meet new people beyond your circle of friends.
2. Make the most of short encounters with others.
3. Plan a public meeting.
4. Be helpful.
5. Keep informed of unofficial news in the organization.
6. Look for problems in communication and determine solutions.

FOUR WAYS TO ESTABLISH A CONTACT BASE

1. Start with people with whom you are comfortable -- business associates or friends.
2. Base your approach depending on how well you know the person.
3. Be frank regarding your shortcomings. You do not want to be referred to jobs that are not suited for you.
4. Remember that you want information about jobs. Do not ask for a job.

NINE TACTICS TO EXPAND YOUR CONTACT BASE

1. Join associations and professional groups.
2. Find out if the association has a membership list of names and organizations.
3. Join your college alumni group.
   -Successful alumni enjoy helping people from their university.
4. Enroll in night classes, hobby groups, etc. . . .
5. Gather where company employees go for lunch or after work.
6. Become a volunteer for a charity in which your perspective company supports.
7. Work as a temporary.
   -This will enable you to work for target companies and make contacts.
8. Focus your aims and requests.
   -Be specific with each contact and schedule appointments.
9. Strive for a concrete result from each meeting.
   -Get specific leads.

SEVEN WAYS TO OBTAIN AND USE REFERRALS

1. Keep track of all contact people on 3x5 cards which list the contact's name and number, when you met, and the information that was given.
2. Be discriminating.
   -Narrow down your list of cards to those who will help you the most.
3. Follow through promptly when contacting your referral.
4. The best time to call is early in the morning in the middle of the week.
5. Do not call Monday or Friday, during lunch hour, or late in the afternoon.
6. The purpose of your call is to introduce yourself.
   -Save the small talk for the meeting.
7. Identify the person who referred you early in the conversation.

SIX WAYS TO FOLLOW UP ON YOUR MEETING

1. Keep in touch with the referral and remind them that you are interested.
2. Set-up a concrete reason to get back to your referral.
3. Send a thank-you note.
4. Let them know how you are utilizing their ideas.
5. Ask the person who referred you for some feedback.
6. Share with them any information you learned.

SUMMARY

We believe reading and following these lists will improve your communication skills and make you more effective in your first years of business. We are convinced that the time you spent reading this manual will prove beneficial. Keep using this booklet for your ticket to success.

The flight attendants wish to thank you for flying Flight to Success and they hope you have enjoyed the journey.